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71**SPECIAL INFORMATION REPORT****Radical Left-wing Direction for 1972**

Left-wing activists undoubtedly prompted by recent failures in the technique of mass protest demonstrations have launched a new approach to radicalism which appears a transition toward political orthodoxy. After the collapse of SDS in Chicago in the summer of 1969, many radicals became disenchanted with the violence and militancy propounded by the remaining feuding factions of SDS. A number of added factors have played a role in what now appears to be the radical strategy for 1972 and perhaps beyond. The changing tenor of campuses across the nation, the winding down of the war, the changes in the selective service system, and the nation's present economic crunch are all factors in the new left shift to an action strategy more acceptable to the sympathetic masses believed to be abroad crying out for rational leadership.

Although the strategy of the 60's of mass and militant demonstrations experienced some success, the overwhelming failure of last November 6 as well as the perennial failure of the left to enlist the support of those elements of American society believed necessary to effect a revolution have been largely unsuccessful. All of the bluster and ballyhoo, the propaganda, and the pleading have failed to elicit significant support from America's vast working class.

Shortly after the May Day demonstrations which attempted to shutdown Washington, a group of left-wing activists, principally former SDS'ers, began the spade work for the formation of a radical political party that would provide leadership to what left-wing spokesmen believe to be 20 percent of the American population. It should be noted that in her critique of May Day activities in Washington, Mm. Binh, the Vietcong negotiator in Paris, encouraged the formation of such a political party in the United States. Under the principal leadership of Staughton Lynd the former Ivy League history professor who has been involved in radical leftism for a generation and Michael Lerner of the Seattle Liberation Front who has been much in the radical spotlight in recent years, the New American Movement began organizing last June. These men and

others operated on the premise that the main impediment to effective political development is the left itself, which has made itself increasingly irrelevant and unresponsive at a time when most people are straining to hear a coherent account of the crises they experience in their lives.

It was the belief of Lynd, Lerner and others that many of the major new left doctrines needed new thinking, organizing, and practice to alter the disintegration of the past two years. NAM and its founders will, during 1972, reject what they regard as errors of the past. These errors include the misuse and overglorification of the "third world" and its revolutionary struggles. NAM will also reject the past unwillingness to launch a serious socialist analysis of anti-imperialism and the continuing struggle against an economic system which permits imperialism to function. NAM leaders propose to alter the glorification of spontaneity (principle of "participatory democracy") and the failure to undertake a meaningful scientific study of the American society.

NAM, according to principal spokesmen, will reject the adoption of militancy as the substance rather than the form of movement politics. Inwardly, NAM will endeavor to transform society rather than just the political left (a criticism of past radical infighting) and will reject the notion that leadership is illegitimate elitism.

In rejecting these alleged mistakes, the New American Movement intends to start in a different direction and envisions a fresh orientation directed outward and able to speak with purpose and with candor to the majority of the American people. The objective, in short, is a mass membership organization.

The first significant formation convention was held by approximately 400 left-wing radicals at Davenport, Iowa over the Thanksgiving Day weekend. Those in attendance represented a number of local organizations from around the country and a number of former SDS activists. The convention established a 13-member national interim committee (standard organizing procedure for such groups) limited to an advisory role until next June when the organization expects to hold its formal founding convention. NAM claims to have chapters presently forming in 25 American cities. All are still quite small. The orientation at Davenport was aimed at economic problems and control of local institutions and made little or no mention of America's Vietnam involvement other than cliches and generalizations about imperialism. NAM intends to develop programs around which people can be "mobilized" to struggle (an old Communist doctrine).

Programs will be geared to include the struggle for worker

control in the factory and community control in the cities, states, and in the national political arena. NAM will also promote community control of economic institutions and attack the established policies of health care, tax reform, the oppression of women, "Nixonomics", racism, etc. According to Michael Lerner, these programs will be put forward around a socio-political analysis which calls for the complete restructuring of economic and political life in America.

It is felt that the New American Movement and other new, radical political parties still in various stages of development, may be highly significant during 1972. The organizational brain trust of NAM is not yet fully known, but if the remainder are radical thinkers of the caliber of Lerner and Lynd, a controlled approach (the party system) may indeed hold the key to the decade of the 70's. When a radical political organization crumbles or the action tactic becomes unacceptable to the constituent masses, it cannot be concluded that the disillusioned will henceforth embrace the rational philosophies of the major American parties.

The sheep are in the field and Lerner and Lynd regard themselves capable of shepherding the lost ones into the left-wing body politic. If properly directed and properly paced, the New American Movement may indeed enjoy considerable success in 1972. At the Davenport meeting the leadership rejected the propagandizing of a small group of Maoist Progressive Labor Party types but encouraged the participation in NAM of the widest possible variety of unhappy Americans. NAM is soliciting the support of working people, housewives, older people, and street people, as well as youth. Most of those attending the Davenport meeting were in their late twenties and most were longtime new leftists. The development of the New American Movement will be followed closely in coming months.